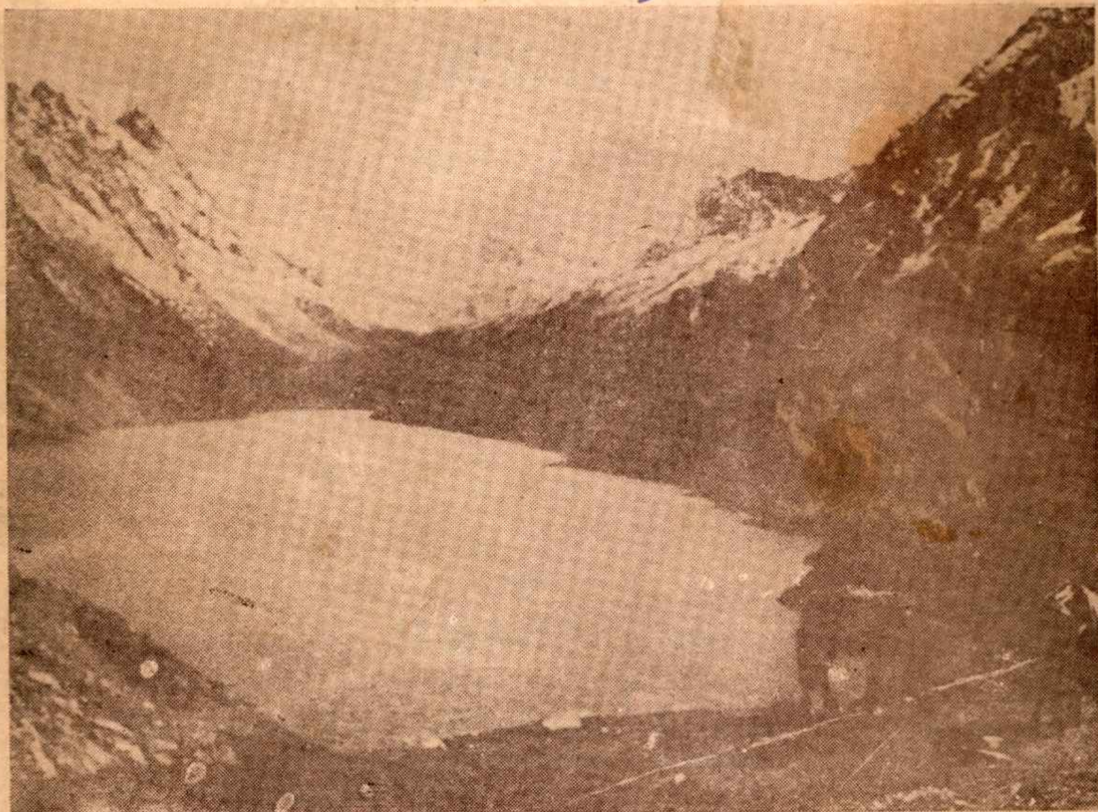
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THE SAFFRON OFFERING



GANGA BAL LAKE

KUMKUMANJALI

(THE SAFFRON OFFERING)

A SOUVENIR

Contents

EDITOR

PROF. C.L. SAPRU

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PRICE RUPEES TWENTY

Swami Vivekananda's Views on Kashmir

EXCERPTS FROM THE LETTERS OF SWAMI JI

". . .I shall not try to describe Kashmir to you. Suffice it to say, I never felt sorry to leave any country except this Paradise on earth; and I am trying my best, if I can to influence the Raja in starting a centre. So much to do here, and the material so hopeful. . . ."

—To Sister Nivedita (Miss Margret E. Noble) Dated Srinagar Ist october 1897

". . .If you can spend a winter here, you are sure to recoup your health. If the house is a good one and if you have enough fuel and warm clothing, then in a land of snow is nothing but enjoyable. Bring Yogen with you; for the earth here is not stony, it is clay like that of Bengal."

—To brother disciple Rakhal (Swami Brahmananda) Dated Srinagar, 17th July 1898

"It is a lazy life I am leading for the last two months, floating leisurely in a boat which is also my home, up and down the beautiful Jhelum, through the most gorgeous scenery God's world can afford, in natures own park, where the earth, air land, grass, plants, trees, mountains, snows and the human form all express, on the outside at least, the beauty of the Lord—with almost no possessions, scarcely a pen or an ink-stand even snatching up a meal whenever or wherever convenient, the very ideal of a Rip Van Winkle !

—Sgr. dated 25th August 1898

Pandit Jwaharlal Nehru's Views on Kashmir

"Like some supremely beautiful woman, whose beauty is almost impersonal and above human desire, such is Kashmir in all its feminine beauty of river and Valley and lake and graceful trees. And then another aspect of this magic beauty would come to view, a masculine one, of hard mountains and precipices and snow-capped peaks and glaciers, and cruel and ficree torrents rushing down to the Valleysbelow".

Kashmir can rightly boast of having a recorded history extending to thousands of years past. All this we owe to the great Kashmiri Pandit KALHANA. Pandit Nehru writes about Kalhana and his RAJTARANGINI :

"And yet Kalhana's book is something far more than a record of kings' doings. It is a rich store-house of information, political, social and to some extent economic. We see the panoply of the middle ages, the feudal knights in glittering armour, quixotic chivalry and disgusting cruelty, loyalty unto death and senseless treachery; we read of royal amours and intrigues and of fighting and militant and adulterous queens. Women seem to play quite an important part, not only behind the scenes but in the councils and the field as leaders and soldiers. Some time we get intimate glimpses of human relations and human feelings, of love and hatred, of faith and passion. We read of Suyya's great engineering feats and irrigation works; of Lalitaditya's distant wars of conquest in far countries; of the building of temples and monasteries and their destruction by unbelievers and iconoclasts who confiscated the temple treasures. And then there were famines and floods and great fires which decimated the population and reduced the survivors to misery."—

In 1916 Jawaharlal Nehru spent some weeks in the mountains of Kasmir. In his "Autobiograpby", he gives the reader some impressions of his travels there :

"This was my first experience of the narrow and lonely valleys, high up in the world, which lead to the Tibetan plateau. From the top of the Zojila pass we saw the rich verdant mountain side below us on one side and the bare bleak rock on the other. We went up and up the narrow vally bottom, flanked on each side by mountains, with the snow-covered tops gleaming on one side and little glaciers creeping down to meet us. The wind was cold and bitter but the sun was warm in the day time, and the air was so clear that ofen we were misled about the distance of objects, thinking them much nearer than they actually were. The loneliness grew; there were not even trees or vegetation to keep us company—only the bare rock and the snow and ice and, sometimes, very welcome flowers. Yet I found a strange satisfaction in these wild and desolate haunts of nature; I was full of energy and a feeling of exaltation.

"I had an exciting experience during this visit. At one place on our march beyond the Zojila pass—I think it was called Matayan—we were told that the cave of Amarnath was only eight miles away. It was true that an enormous mountain, all covered with ice and snow, lay in between and had to be crossed, but what did that matter? Eight miles seemed so little. In our enthusiasm and inexperience we decided to make the attempt. So we left our camp (which was situated at about 11,500 feet altitude) and with a small party went up the mountain. We had a local shepherd for a guide.

"We crossed and climbed several glaciers, roping our-selves up, and our troubles increased ahd breathing became a little difficult. Some of our porters, lightly laden though they were, began to bring up blood. It began to snow and the glaciers became terribly slippery, we were fagged out and every step meant a special effort. But still we persisted in our foolhardy attempt. We had left our camp, at four in the morning and after twelve hour's almost contihual climbing we were rewarded by the sight of a huge ice-field. This was a magnificent sight, surrounded as it was by snow peaks, like a diadem or an amphitheatre of the gods. But fresh snow and mists soon hid the sight from us. I do not know what our altitude was but I think it must have been about 15,000 to 16,000 feet, as we were considerably higher than the cave of Amarnath. We had now to cross this ice-field, a distance probably of half a mile,

and then go down on the other side to the cave. We thought that as the climbing was over, our principal difficulties had also been surmounted, and so, very tired but in good humour, we began this stage of the journey. It was a tricky business as there were many crevasses and the fresh snow often covered a dangerous spot. It was this fresh snow that almost proved to be my undoing, for I stepped upon it and it gave way and down I went into a huge and yawning crevasse. It was a tremendous fissure and anything that went right down it could be assured of safe keeping and preservation for some geological ages. But the rope held and I clutched to the side of the crevasse and was pulled up. We were shaken up by this but still we persisted in going on. The crevasses, however, increased in number and width and we had no equipment or means of crossing some of them. And so at last we turned back, weary and disappointed, and the cave of Amarnath remained unvisited".

The Charachter of Kashmiri Pandits

BY

PANDIT ANAND KAUL BAMZAI

IT is difficult to give a people's characteristics. If we dive down deep into human character, no one would stand the test. An English statesman of the last generation said that he did not know how to frame an indictment against a whole nation. The character of a people must, however, be studied from the historical and psyhological stand-points and not merely from the logical. We should be satisfied if the main essential traits of it are right without throwing out insinuations which are all the more damning because they cannot be adequately proven.

The Kashmiri Pandit is famous for hospitality. Pay a visit to him and he will treat you to the point of worship. It is not uncommon that he will offer food prepared for himself to a guest who chances to come unexpectedly in his house and will himself remain hungry until fresh food is prepared for him. If a guest comes to his house and he has got no cash at hand wherewith to buy tea to be served to him, he will secretly go and pawn one of his personal effects and bring the tea. Well has some one said—

> *"Zara zara hai mere Kashmir ka mihman-nawaz Rah men pathar ke tukrun se mila pàni mujhe."*

"Everywhere greets me the hospitable host of my Kashmir I got water from even the pebbles on the way.'.

The Pandit is truly of 'simple breed'—simple in food and simple in dress. Patience and resignation are writ large on his behaviour. Give him a slap on the right cheek and he will turn the left but will never provoke you to a quarrel. So law-abiding he is that he regards a State official as a 'fiat of destiny.' He is kind to his family and respectful to ladies and is loath to remain away from home, often embracing idleness as a refuge from it. He is free from crime against the person and from burglary and thievery. Being naturally sober-minded, he has no lust for passion. Wine and other drinks he spurns at. Contentment dominates his character. 'So long as rice and millet grow and salt is not dear, his life is much the same and gods may be propitiated.'

The Panditani is, indeed, a picture of self-denial. She abhors fashion from her very core. She is noted for modesty, punctiliousness and chastity and also for industry and thrift. She is brought up to be a mother, never a wife, having been given the epithet of *bacha-pasand* (fond of children). She is a picture of self-abnegation. She has not become a wife by self-assertion or by the survival of the fittest. She stands resplendent as the mother worshipful, not a beautiful wife to be wooed. She towers above low humanity because of her moral grandeur and not physical charms. Her high spiritual status is reflected in the mythology; indeed the Pandits nay, all Hindus, think habitually of God as She.

The Pandit is intelligent. Even at a distance in the Durbār he can tell by observing the movements of the Secretary's pen what orders are being dictated by the Maharaja. Aurangzeb once paid a compliment to his intelligence at Agra as is recorded in the *Rquat-i-Alamgiri* :—

"*Kashmiri darin mulk nistand ki ma muqurar kunem*"—

(The Kashmiris are not to be found here that we might appoint them in public offices).

He is shrewd, alive to the comic touch, and has a natural gift of repartee. During the Pathan rule a Pandit was asked by a Sirdār why there were 108 beads in the rosary round his neck. "Because the beads are used to keep count in the recitation of the name of Haq (God)" was the ready reply, "the two letters of H and Q standing as they are for 108 in reckoning by *abjad*." Diwān Dilā Rām Quli Khān was once sarcastically asked by Timur Shāh Durāni at Kābul why the *tika* mark was made by him on his forehead. He replied that it indicated that God was one. Timur Shāh enquired why the ears were also marked. He explained that it was to show that they were two witnesses to this fact. Timur Shāh, in order to baffle him, further asked why the throat was also besmeared. He replied that it meant that whoever entertained any doubt about it was fit to be beheaded. The King was pleased with the plausibility of the answers to his questions and then Dilā Rām Quli Khān bore the bell by adding the following two couplets in Persian :—

"*Bar chahra am nazar kun pashaniam bibin*
Dagha ghulamia Shahi-Maulast bar jebin"
"*Gar Musalman kafir O kafirMusalman shud*
chi shud Ancha bayad shud na shud gar in
ugar an shud chi shud."

"Look at my face and see my forehead.
The mark of slavery of the Master King is on my forehead".
"If Muslmān became a *kafir* or *kafir* a Musalman.
If he did not become what he ought to (i.e., pious, Godfearing, etc.)
What matters it if he became this (*kafir*) or that (Musalmān)."

Mahārāja Gulāb Singh once reproachfully remarked—"The Pandits are coward and lack martial spirit, hence they shirk taking to the military service." A Pandit being present at once replied—"Pray, thank Heaven, the Pandits do not take to military service, for do you not remember what one single Brahmin (Paras Rām) did in ancient times after he wore his belt and sword"? The Pandit's tenacity, adaptability and elasticity as regards his political environment has cruelly been construed to mean cowardice. He has survived the most ruthless, barbarous and savage rule which he was subjected to in the past. Given the same destructive and fatal circumstances to live and work under, can there be found a people, other than the Kashmiri, who could

endure this inhuman rule for six odd centuries and survive it? The sons of Avantivarma and Lalitāditya, and the progeny of the blessed Rishis struggled hard, and that in a peculiar way, against the brutal activity of the religiously fanatic administrators. It was neck or nothing with them in order to save their own religion. Hundreds were put to sword, thousands were flung into the rivers and lakes or killed in their homes. With indomitable courage, both physical and moral, they faced death at the hands of the "Deputies of God" and their so-called *servants* sent to rule over them. Is it not then the tenacity, the adaptability and elasticity of the Kashmiri that has helped him to survive atrocities and has it not again been foolishly termed cowardice? His motive of superlative strength is to act worthily of the family, to bring no disgrace upon his ancestors, and to do everything to build up and strengthen the heritage of the family. Free from bigotry, the Pandit deals impartially with all the other communities. He is essentially a man of peace, living peacefully and complacently with his Muhammadan brethren, so much so that he often worships near the same place where they do. Untouchability, in the rigid sense of the word, is unknown to him. Having been under the yoke of foreign rule for centuries he fears a person come from abroad but, under a compatriot of his, he frets and gets cheeky. He takes delight in hearing sensational political news and to know the change of high officials, though the one rung out and the one rung in may both be strangers to the country. He is garrulous, anti-everything and will gossip the whole day. He is courteous, polite and graceful to a fault. His aesthetic sense is considerably developed. He is fond of things beautiful. He likes rich food. In caligraphy he has a good taste and a Pandit's handwriting is readily distinguishable. He is an excellent clerk with a good accounts head. His pronunciation in any language is distinct and accurate. With even a little knowlege he polishes his intellect to a high degree. He has got a peculiar kind of genius. Everything brings grist to his mill. Put him where-ever you will, he is sure to shine out. He devises big-plans and executes them faithfully. His judgement is sound and his counsel pregnant with wisdom. In superior service he shows marvellous capacity. He conceals poverty, trying to make his figure presentable much more than his narrow circumstances permit. This is a proof of his possessing self-respect. A man may have had eaten nothing in his own house, yet he will go out with a tooth-pick in his hand playing with his teeth to feign having had his meal *plus* meat. There is an amusing story current that once a would-be gentleman had had no meal in his house, but before going out he rubbed oil out of his lamp on his moustaches so that those who met him might infer, from the glistening of them, that he must have had a feast with an abundance of ghee therein. But accidentally the wick had stuck to his finger when taking out the oil from the lamp and it was caught in one of his moustaces. Any one who saw his moustache could not resist being moved to a smile, while he thought the smile was a proof of his trick having succeeded to make others believe that he had had a sumptuous feast, and so he prolonged his lounge and saunter in the bazar. In the evening he returned home and, actuated by vanity, he brought his looking-glass to see how his moustaches were glistening and was abashed to find the wick on one of them which, he now realized, was the real cause of the smiles of the people in the bazar. A poor

man will deny himself the luxury of milk or meat in order to save a pice or two for purchasing soap to wash his clothes. The proverb he will quote is—

Yad mtsarit chhuo nah kanh wuchhan tannih sari wuchhan

(No one looks into the stomach but everyone sees the body.)

During the Pathan rule a typical Pandit, fond of showing himself off as a gentleman, was going about with a turban very artistically bound. A Pathan caught sight of his pretty turban and thought it would make a nice strong cloth for his own *kamarband* ; so he snatched it away from his head. But, to, on opening it he found that it consisted of several rags tied immaculately one upon another! This, of course, gave disappointment to the Pathan, who flung it back on the Pandit, adding a slap to his head as a punishment for having worn a sham turban which deceived him to take unnecessary trouble.

The Pandit considers charity as a sacred duty: No beggar will go empty-handed from his door. No Pandit will take his meal before giving a portion thereof to birds and dogs. The piously disposed go and put rice wherever they find ants swarming in search of food. Even a snake, far from being killed, is offered a plateful of milk.

Batah Batah kaw batah (the Pandits are like crows) is a proverb, showing that the Pandits help and sympathise with one another like crows who are gregarious and who, on finding any food anywhere, caw aloud inviting others of their own species to share it with them. Methinks, this virtue the Pandits might have possessed in times olden, but it has declined among the present generation. At present the following saying is unfortunately true :—

Kasdmiri ba Kashmiri guft
Kashmiri ki man khalas shavam,

Meaning that a Kashmiri desires the destruction of his fellow countryman. The Pandit is loyal and faithful to his master of which numerous evidences can be found in the history of Kashmir. He has got the nack of speedily adapting himself to the changed circumstances. During the Pathan rule he wore a girdle round his waist, *chakma* and *dulak* on his feet and studied Persian ; during the Sikh rule he wore a long flowing beard ; during the Dogra rule he wore moustaches, and, since the change in court languages, has begun to shave his beard clean and to wear his clothes after English style.

Other characteristics of the Pandit are illustrated in the following proverbs :—

Batas tesd (The Pandit has endurance). *Batah mor shenkih* (The Pandit died of hesitation), *i.e.*, is over-cautious. *Batah gav gratah* (The Pandit is a mill), *i.e.*, is industrious. Once he plunges into a business he is apt to show indefatigable courage and will work from morn till night. He will put his heart into any work entrusted to him, his motto being that there is no more miserable and useless creature on earth than he who loves not his "wife" and his "work." *Batas bod doh tah phakah* (On his big day the Pandit fasts), *i.e.* is religious. *Batah mari Magi* (The Pandit is apt to die in the month of Māgh) *i.e.*, attends to his personal cleanliness not desisting to bathe in the river even in the coldest season. *Batao chhuh butlyih zats juldai tatan jaldai teran* (The Pandit is of the nature of a brazen pot—quick to get heated and quick to get cold), *i.e.*, is spendthrift and as soon as he earns something he spends it quickly, not keeping by

anything to fall back upon in the rainy days, so, when these days come, he shrinks to penury. Self-sacrifice is a marked feature in his character. A joint family is esteemed and respected. One breadwinner may have several relations in his house as his dependents.

I have, so far dwelt on only the bright side of the picture. It has also got the other side. There are certain foibles in the Pandit's character. He is lethargic, often embraching idlenss as a refuge from going to alien land. He hankers after State employ. An apprenticeship in an office he hails as a gift of fortune. He is apathetic towards arts, crafts, industries, manual labour, business and agriculture. He is envious towards the members of his own community with the inverse ratio of distance in relationships and connections. Fortune generally frowns upon him but, if she ever happens to smile, he becomes puffed up. He lacks back-bone and fights shy when you meet him.

But the critics are prone to make exaggerations in maligning him (though he is more sinned against than sinning) and silly abuses out of number are hurled over his devoted head. One man writes thus—

Be gharaz nist agar dusti izhar kunand
Ba khusumat chu darayand na joyand sabab
Ba mahabbat chu zubab o ba murwat zambir
Ba sakhawat chu ghurab o ba suja'at artab.

"It is not without selfishness if they show friendship.

"When intent to quarrel they (Pandits) need have no cause.

"In love he is like a fly ; in helping like a hornet.

"In generosity like a crow ; in valour like a rabbit."

Lanepools says that Kashmir is the home of lies.

The vilification just referred to, reiterated generation after generation, comes to be accepted as embodying irrefragable verities and breeds a settled contempt and aversion for the weaker, vanquished people in the minds of men and women of the dominant race ; the prejudice thus established and perpetuated being easily mistaken for a fundamental instinct due to subtle causes traceable to eternal and unalterable laws of nature. But those who have studied them throughly express a different opinion about them. Sir W.R. Lawrence has written in his book "*Valley of Kashmir*" that the Kashmiris are honest and reliable. The same has been testified to by Sir Lepel Graffin and other learned judges of men. Dr. Ernest F. Neve, who has spent over 32 years in close touch with the people of Kashmir, says in his very interesting book "*Beyond the Pir Punjal*".

"On the whole the Kashmiris are grateful to benefits, Their moral sense is fairly developed. They readily distinguish from right and wrong."

Of the Pandits he says—"Their intellectual superiority over the rest of the population must be admitted. They are quick of apprehension and have good memories. One of their besetting faults is conceit. But some of them are very superior, trustworthy, honest. clear-headed and industrious." A French gentleman, M. Hick, has written that the Kashmiris are a race of a most superior order in every respect.

—Reproduced from the 'KASHMIRI PANDIT'
By Anand Kaul Banrzai

A page from the History of Kashmiri Pandits—

Kashmiri Pandits at Ranjit Singh's Durbar

By

PANDIT JIALAL KILAM

IN our preceding chapters we have seen how the Kashmiri Pandits had begun an orderly migration from Kashmir eversince the Moghuls occupied the country. Some left the country willingly in search of "meadows and pastures new" and some were forced to leave the country by the exigencies of times. They spread over the whole of the Indian sub-continent. With the breakdown of the Moghul Empire a number of kingships came into existence and the Pandits entered into services there. They went as far away as Bengal. Pandit Kidar Nath, an ancester of Hon'ble Pandit Ajudhya Prashad Kunzru, became the Diwan of Mir Jaffar. In these very days Pandit Sada Sukh (grand-father of Hon'ble Bishambar Nath) was in charge of Revenue administration in the Haidarabad State. So also in many other States. In the pandemonium which followed the breakdown of the Moghul rule in Kashmir, Pandit Kishen Das, an unknown Kashmiri Pandit, left his native place and reached Delhi. By dint of his high attainments in the Persian language he succeeded in carving a place for himself at the Moghul Court. He became there the nucleus of a small group of Pandits and wherever they went they went in a body. He had a son by name Pandit Ganga Ram who rose very high at the Sikh Durbar. With the establishment of the Sikh rule in the Punjab, the necessity of regulating the finances of the State was keenly felt by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Having been apprised of the attainments of Ganga Ram in this branch, the Sikh Ruler invited him to Lahore. Till then there were very few Kashmiri Pandits residing at Lahore. Ganga Ram accepted the offer and moved in the year 1813 A.D. to Lahore with a number of Pandits, the chief amongst them being Raja Dina Nath Daya Ram, Hari Ram, Gopi Nath, Ram Kishen, Ganga Bishen Gamkhar, Lachman Prashad etc. These and many others settled at Lahore and were prominently placed at the

Sikh court. Pandit Ganga Ram having risen very high in the estimation of the Sikh ruler was appointed as the Finance Minister. After the death of Pandit Ganga Ram the mantle fell upon the shoulders of his friend and relative Raja Dina Nath, who had accompanied him to Lahore from Delhi, where one of his forefathers Rugh Nath had settled in the reign of Emperor Mohammad Shah. His father Pandit Bhaktmal also was employed at the Sikh court. But Raja Dina Nath rose to a higher place of eminence. He was put in charge of the Privy Seal by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. After the Maharaja, general disorder prevailed. The army became restive and then openly rebellious. Many prominent Sirdars were killed and many princes of the royal blood were made to taste the bitter cup of an ignominous death. But in all this disastrous fire of misrule, if there was one man who came out unscathed, it was Raja Dina Nath alone. Not only that; his power and influence incresed daily. It is recorded about him that when the political firmament appeared peaceful and happy, his discreming eye perceived the onward march of silent and invisible clouds which rained fire and disaster, after some time. He made his plans to tide over the difficulty long before the difficulty had made its appearance.[1] European historians describe him as Talleyrand of the Punjab, but in spite of the sting in the insinuation contained in the remark, he was very highly spoken of by the Europeans with whom he came into contact. The amount of recognition which they gave to his great power and influence can be gathered from the fact that he was one of the signatories to the treaty which was concluded between the Sikhs and the British after the First Sikh War. Later on a council was constituted in December 1846 for the governance of the Punjab and Raja Dina Nath was made its President, with the active support of the British.[2]

With Raja Dina Nath in saddle, hundreds of Kashmiri Pandits migrated to the Punjab from Kashmir. He became the rallying factor of all these fresh imigrants and invariably helped them to careers. In course of time Pandit colonies sprang up both at Lahore and Amritsar. In view of the fact that Raja Dina Nath and other Kashmiri Pandit notables had succeeded in winning the confidence of the British conquerers, the latter meted out to them great encouragement, and made them recipients of many posts of trust and honour which were till then kept closed to Indians.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh had modelled his army on European plan. There were many French Generals serving in his army, chief amongst whom being Ventura and Allard. Ventura was in charge of the Maharaja's Fauji-khas which was considered to be the flower of the Sikh army. He was assisted by a Kashmiri Pandit, the son of Pandit Ganga Ram by name Adjutant General Diwan Ajudhya Prashad[3]. Ajudhya Prashad showed considerable skill in handling military matters. During Ventura's absence on leave, Ajudhya Prashad was placed in full command of the Fauji Khas and during this time he led successful military expeditions against the Raja of Mandi and other refractory hill chieftains. After his return from France, Ventura paid a glowing tribute to the military genius of the Pandit, and remarked that he had found the troops in a better spirit than when he had left them in charge of the Pandit. After Ventura's final exit, Pandit Ajudhya Prashad was placed in independent command of these troops.

There is no use in multiplying names of the persons who were prominent at the Sikh court. But even then there is one person whose mention would not be out of place here. We mean Col. Badri Nath. He migrated from Kashmir during the Afghan rule, and got enlisted as a sepoy in the Sikh army. He gradually rose to the rank of a Colonel. He was second in command to General Hari Singh Nalwa when the latter wrested Peshawar from the Barakzais.[4]

But the Sikh Empire was a short lived affair. Circumstances cropped up which ended the Sikh rule in the Punjab for all time.

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1. Punjab chiefs by Griffin.
2. Mashahiri Kashmir by Fauq.
3. Mashahiri Kashmir by Fauq.
   See also Punjab Chifs by Griffin.
4. Punjab ehiefs by Griffin.

Philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism

By

DR. BALJI NATH PANDIT

Mahayana which may rightly be called a synthesis of the concept of Shiva and Shakti and of the early Buddhistic philosophy, attained singular popularity and became a powerful philosophical-cum-religious force not only in north India but also in central Asia and China. By the end of the 8th century, however, Buddhism lost its pristine glory and was supplanted by the re-emerging Brahmanic thought and philosophy. After the reign of Kanishka the shaivian philosophers thought that an organised attempt was necessary to counter the preachings of Buddhism. The only doctrine which could have proved strong and vigorous to serve the purpose was the absolute idealism of the Advaita School. It was in this milieu that monistic philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism took shape until it attained the status of a distinct school of philosophy.

Shaiva cult, is most probably the oldest religion of India. The seat of the most ancient sages of this cult was, according to tradition, that peak of the Mahindra mountain, which lies submerged under the waters of the sea in the Bay of Bengal. The light thrown on the ancient History of India by excavations at Mohenjodaro and Harappa proves that Shaivism was well developed popular religion of the Indian people long before the vedic Aryans entered this country. Afterwards it exercised its influence on the religious thoughts of the vedic Aryans and that resulted in the transfer of supremacy from Indra of the *Rigveda* to Rudra of the *Yajurveda* and later to Shiva and Vishnu of the Epics and Puranas. The ancient Shaivism got mixed with the Vedic Brahmanism and became a vital element of the post-Vedic, Hinduism. Its special features were, however, preserved for thousands of years by so many lines of saints started by ancient sages like Agastya, Durvasa, Parasurama, Markandya etc. The literary activities of these lines of saints gave rise to the growth of ascetic literature which was incorporated in the Mahabharta and compiled in the works like the Yogavasishta. It produced, in addito this the 28 Shaiva Agamas mentioned by later Shaiva authors. These Agamas were partly or fully dualistic in outlook and all the different philosophic schools of the Saivism of the South owe their origin to these 28 Agamas.

Saints and sages like Tryambakaditya, Srinatha, Amardaka, Macchanda etc,, appear-

ed in the early centuries of the christian era. The activities of the lines of their disciples resulted in the rise of the Shaiva philosophy of the North. Tryambakaditya, having been instructed by sage Durvasa taught Shaivism from a purely monistic angle of vision. Sixty-four Agamas of this monistic Shaivism were revealed to the seers of this line of teachers. Sangamaditya, the 16th descendant of Tryanbakaditya visited Kashmir in the seventh century and settled here permanently. The mcnistic school of Shaivism got, in this way, transplanted in this beautiful Himalayan valley. The glorious reign of Lalitaditya attracted great scholars from so many parts of the country to Kashmir and this land became still more fertile for the growth of any subject of learning. Most of the 64 Shiva Agamas mentioned above may have probably appeared in this very land.

The philosophic principles of the monistic Shaivism were lying scattered here and there in these Agamas which consisted of dialogues between Shiva and Parvati. Those principles had to be extracted from them and then compiled and arranged properly and interpreted correctly. Somananda, the fourth descendant of Sangamaditya, churned, as it were, the Ocean of Shaiva Agamas and drew from it the nectar of the principles of the monistic Shaiva philosophy. He compiled and arranged those principles in a philosophic style and expressed them in his own words in the *Shivadristi*, the first philosophic treatise on the monistic Shaivism. Somananda may have belonged to the later part of the eighth and the earlier part of the ninth centuries A.D. Utpaladeva, the most prominent disciple of Somananda, was an efficient teacher as well. He composed several philosophic works like the *Ishvara Pratyabhijna* and *Siddhitrayi* and gave sufficient refinement and clearness to the principles of Shaivism expressed in the *Shiva-drsti*. Being a poet of great merit as well, he expressed his philosophic views through a beautiful and sweet poetry which came later to be known as the *Shivastotravali*. He wrote brief commentaries on the *Shivadristi* and his own works as well. Utpaladeva belonged to the ninth century A.D. and may have lived up to the beginning of the tenth.

Abhinavagupta, the greatest interpreter of monistic Shaivism, appeared in Kashmir in the first half of the 10th Century A.D. He was the grand disciple of Utpaladeva and wrote detailed commentaries on all important works of the two previous authors. Some of those commentaries have been lost, but two detailed ones, namely, the *Isvarapratyabijna vimarsini* and the *Isvarapratyahhijna-vivrti-vimarsini* are still available. These commentaries rank among the best philosophic works of India. He composed serveral easy and smaller works for the use of beginners in the study of Shaivism and the most important among these are the *Bodha Pancadasika*, *Paramartha-carca* and *Paramarthasara*.

The monistic Shaiva philosophy of Kashmir had attained great development in both its sides of theory and practice. Its theoretic side was fully elucidated in the above mentioned treatises and commentaries, but the side of practice was still lying disarranged, uninterpreted and scattered in the ocean of Agamas. Somananda had done some effort on this side in the last chapter of his *Shivadristi* and also in his notes on the *Paratrinsika*, but there was still so much which was yet to be accomplished. Vasugupta another great author of Kashmir on Shaivism had drawn the essence of the *Trika* system of practice through the

Shivasutras discovered by him and Bhatta Kallata' a disciple of Vasugupta and an equally great philosopher, had explained the doctrines laid down in *The Shivasutras*, in his *Spanda karika*. But there was still so much confusion about the Shaivistic practice and that was yet to be removed.

There were several systems of practice called *'acaras'* which were prevalent among Shaivas. The most prominent among them were, (1) Shaivacara, (2) Vamacara, (3) Daksinacara, (4) Kulacara, (5) Matacara, (6) Samayacara, (7) Trikacara. The last one, that is, the Trika System, was mostly popular with the shaivas of Kashmir. This system was originally expressed in three *Agamas* namely *Vamatantra*, *Siddhaatntra* and *Malinitantra*. A comprehensive work on this system, throwing sufficient light on all the higher and lower types of its practice and showing its distinction from all other systems, was yet to be composed. The work done by Somananda, Vasugupta and Kallata was so brief that it could not remove the confusion about the exact nature of all the Shaivistic practices and their comparative merits. It was Abhinavagupta who filled this big gap by composing the voluminous Tantraloka. This work throws sufficient light on certain principles of theory also. It is, in short, an encyclopaedia of the Trika System of Shaivism. The Tantrasara of the same author is a gist of his Tantraloka. In addition to this, he wrote a detailed commentary on the Paratrinsika and elucidated the views of Somananda on the topics of Matrka and Malini in it. *Malini Vijaya Vartika* is another important work of the author. It gives the sum and substance of the *Malini Agama*. He also was a poet of high merit and the most prominent ones among all his philosophic lyrics are *Karmastotra*, *Anubhava Nivedana-Stotra*, *Dehastha-devata-Stotra* and *Anuttraastrka-Stotra*.

Khemaraja, chief diciple of Abhinavagupta composed several easy works like *Spanda-Snndoha Pratybhijna Hrdaya* and *Bodhollasa* for the sake of beginners. He wrote detailed Commentaries on the *Spanda kartika* and *Shivasutra* known as *Nirnaya* and *Vimarsini*, respectively. Ramakantha a disciple of Utpaladeva also wrote a commentary on the *Spanda karika*. Another cammentator on that work is Utpala Vaisnava, Bhatta Bhaskara, the seventh disciple in the line of Vasugupta explained the *sutras* in his couplets called the *Shivasutra-Vartika*. Jayaratha, in the 12th century, wrote a detailed and valuable commentary on the *Tantraloka* of Abhinavagupta. Sitikantha in the 13th century composed the *Mahanaya-Prakasa* in then prevalant Kashmirian Apabhramasa language. This philosophic work is equally important for a student of linguistic studies also.

Sahibkaula, who lived in the time of Shahjehan and Aurangzeb composed several philosophic works such as the *kalparka-Prabavdhu* and the *Saccidananda—Kandali* and some poetic works like the *Devinama vilasa* and the *Shiva-jiva-daska*. He is the first Shaiva author of Kashmir who bears sufficient influence of the Advaita-Vedanta of Sankaracharya. Another Shaiva author, who also bears that influence, is Sivopadhyaya. He composed a work named the Srividya and wrote a commentary on the *Vijnana-bhairava*, an Agamic text, in the 18th century.

These Kashmirian authors worked out a monistic and theistic philosophy which is quite distinct from the Advaita Vedanta and which can stand the sutle logic of the Mahayana Buddhism, Nyaya-Vaisesika, Sankhyayoga and the Hinayanayana Buddhist

philosophies admit that the phenomenal existence is real. The Advaita-Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism deny its reality. The Shaivism of Kashmir contributed a new principle according to which these two divergent views got reconciled. It taught that this phenomenal existence, though transitory in nature, is not unreal as the son of a barren woman. It exists eternally in the eternal truth in the from of that truth just as a plant exists in a seed is the form of the seed. It is manifested in its phenomenal aspect through the free and playful will of that eternal truth and even then that truth does not undergo any change in its basic form. It continues to be what it has been eternally, the limitless, all pervading, all inclusive, blissful and eternal consciousness.

Other schools of Indian philosophy traced the cause of the appearance of the phenomena in a beginningless ignorance but the shaivas of Kashmir trace out the source of that apparently beginnningless ignorance in the free and unrestrictible will be that enternal and blissful consciousness which is the only metaphysical truth. Other schools of our thought are too much idealistic in their out-look regarding the practice of religion and philosophy. Our ideals have, very often, been extremely lofty and generally beyond the reach of an average human being. The Shaivas of Kashmir, taking a pragmatic view of the capacities of a human, being, worked out such a path of practice which could be adopted even by an ordinary human being and through which every one could, sooner or later, attain the desired goal of life. Some of the schools of our philosophy lean towards a partial atheism and some others, though theistic in outlook limited the Godhead of God by the conditions of past actions of worldly souls. But the Shaivas of Kashmir worked out such an absolute type of theism in which God is no relativity God, but is God because of it is basic nature of Godhead and in which the manifestation of all relativels depends on his Godhead alone. These and such other new principles were contributed by Kashmir to the Indian philosophy.

Some of the previously mentioned authors of Shaivism have composed some more works which are either not available at present or not so imortant. There are some more authors of lesser importance as well. The tradition of writing new works and commentaries on Shaivism is still going on in the valley of Kashmir. The monistic Shaiva philosophy, having orginated, developed fully, taught well and learnt thoroughly in the land of Khshmir, is quite appropriately being called as the Shaivism of Kashmir and is, no doubt, the most valuable contribution of this land to Indian philosophy.

—By Courtesy "THE VITASTA", Calcutta

Lalla—Ded

By

PROF. B.N. PARIMOO

In the long line of 'mystical phenomena' that India has witnessed from time to time enriching and embellishing our cultural heritage, Lalla-Ded of Kashmir stands out as a prominent milestone on the SPIRITUAL HIGHWAY. She led the vanguard as early as the first quarter of the fourteenth century of the Christian era.

Lall-ded was born soon after Kashmir had been subjected to an unprecedented carnage and plunder at the hands of ZULJU, presumably a Tartar marauder, and his barbarous hordes. Fourteenth century, as a whole, has been a dark period in the chequered history of Kashmir, and in that bleak firmament was thrown up a spiritual light which has continued to brighten the cultural horizon of Kashmir. Her mystical poetry, known in common parlance as the LALLA-VAKHS, brings solace to human mind today as ever before. The vakhs are an expression of the flowering of the soul of the Yogeshwari. Unequivocally they indicate the path of yoga, a practical discipline for the attainment of the highest knowledge.

Like Shri Ramakrishna, Lalla-ded was a spiritual prodigy. She had the benefit of guidance from a Siddha Guru, Sri Srikantha. In her early married life she had to face very un-toward circumstances, social and domestic, and was almost pushed into the Slough of Despond. In her moments of despair she wailed :

I am towing the bark on the Sea with a rope of untwined yarn;
How I wish my God were to help ferry me across !
My efforts are wasting away like water poured in an unbaked earthen plate!
How I long for return Home;

ऑमि पन, स'दरस नावि छस लमान
कति बोजि; दय म्योन म्यति दियि तार ।
आम्यन टाक्यन पोंञ्न ज़न शमान
ज़ुव छुम ब्रमान गर' गछ़ हां ।।

And again :

I came by the highway but do not return by the same,
In the middle of the long embankment, I find the day coming to a close,
Searching my pocket, I find not a penny:
Alas! what shall I pay the ferryman to carry me across ?

आयस वतॆ गयस ना वतॆ
स्यमंज स्वथि लूसुम दोह ।
चंदस वुछुम त हार न अते
नाव, तारस दिम क्या बोह ॥

But it was not long before she received the WORD of initiation from her Guru· Intensive practice followed which culminated in spiritual perfection. She sings of her attainment in quite a few verses. She says :

By constant practice, the limited self was dissolved in the unlimited (Self),
The qualified Being merged with AKASHA (the unqualified being) into one homogeneous whole)!
The void melted away. Nothing was left over except the ANAMAYA,—the stainless, the pure;
That is the lesson to you, O learned man!

अब्या'सी स्वव्यका'स्य लय, व्यवथू
गगनस सगुण म्यूल समि च्रटा ।
शून्य गोल अनामय मोतू
युहोय व्वप'दीश छुय बटा ।

In the state of Samadhi, the seen and the unseen; the heard and the unheard; the static and the dynamic! in short, all distinctions of experiences sublimated into one vast encompassing Being.

On the most subtle plane, Lalla-ded reveals to us glimpses of the highest Truth. She experiences Truth as a sheer, Absolute unity, and gives us the benefit of her experience through her vakhs. She does not forget to remind the aspirant of the great need to contorl the mind. She says :

I drew the reins of the steed of chitta,
I compressed the breath circulating through the ten nadis :
Lo : the Sasi-kala melted and dripped,
And the void mingled with the Void !

च्यत तुर्ग वगिह्यथ रोटुम
च्यथ मिलविथ दशि नाड़ि ताल
तवय श'शिकल व्यगलिथ बुछुम
शून्यस शून्याह मीलिथ गौ ॥

The perfection of her yoga is revealed through many a vakh and we may take an illustrative one as follows :

I, Lalla, willingly entered the gate,
There, O Joy ! I found Siva united with Sakti;
There and then I got absorbed drinking at the Lake of Nectar.
Dead to the world am I, though still alive.

लल बोह् चायस स्वमन बागुबरस
वुछुम शिवस शक्त मीलिथ त, बाह्
तति लय क'रमस अमृतसरस
ज़िदय मरस तॅ, स्य'करि क्याह् ॥

As an adept yogini, Lalla-ded entered into Samadhi at will, and experienced the unity of transcendental Siva and His power of manifestation, the ommipotent Sakti. Lalla-ded categorically lauds the will of the aspirant. She upholds that the insight into the regions of True Knowledge can be attained by one who has a genuine, intense, burning desire for the Lord. The vakh runs :

For natural insight, mere self control and continence are not enough.
The gateway to deliverance is opened by a mere will.

Getting dissolved in Him, like salt in water,
Sahaja thought is still so difficult to attain.

सहजस शम त दम नो गछे
य'छि प्रावख मुक्ती द्वार ।
सलिलस लवण जन मीलिथ गछे
तोति छुय दुर्लब सहज व्यचार ॥

For obtaining spontaneous samadhi, the seers stress the 'will' of the aspirant.

Lalla-ded became a Jeevan-mukta, released from the bondage of duality and rid of the wheel of transmigration.

From the time Lalla-ded received the WORD from her Guru, she meditated on the primal sound and the Bij-mantra, Om. Her intense love of the Lord coupled with yogic practice ensured her perfection. The "Ajapa Gayatri' mantra with each formulation of breath led her to her spiritual goal. Sri Ramakrishna too recognizes the value of meditation on OM. He says; "When a man sheds tears and when his hair stands on end if he utters the name of Hari or Rama even once, then you may know for certain that he no longer needs to perform any rituals. Then only does have the right to renounce them, or rather, they themselves will drop away from him. Then it will be enough merely to chant the name of Rama or Hari or just the word OM...Ritualistic worship becomes merged in the sacred Gayatri Mantra and the Gayatri likewise becomes merged in OM." In this context, the following vakhs of Lalla-ded are pertinent and useful for the aspirant.

One who fixes up only OMKAR at the naval.
And with the excercise of retained breath, builds a bridge from (the navel) to the Brahmanda,
And cons only that Mantra,
Needs not the use of thousand mantras.

अकुय ऊंकार युस नाबि दरे
क्वंबय ब्रह्माण्डस सुम गरे ।
अख सुय मन्त्र च्यतस करे
तस सास मन्त्र क्याह् करे ।।

In another vakh she, says :

Chant the Ajapa Gayatri (mantra) with each breath, as HAMSA,
Give up the Ego (I-ness) and be absorbed in Him :
Whoso ever abandoned his ego, verily became He.
The lesson to learn is to office the sense of duality.

अज़पा गायत्री ह्ंस ह्ंस जपिथ
अह्म त्रा'विथ सुय अद' रठ
य'म्य त्रोव अह्ं सुय रूद पानय
बोह् न आसुन छुय व्वपदीश ।।

But the effacement of ego does not mean renunciation of hearth and home and mundane duties and obligations. Lalla-ded does not advocte escape from duties. She says :

Some renounced their hearth and home, and took to living in the forest hermitages,
All in vain! as long as the mind is not tethered at home; counting your breath day and night,
As you are so shall you be.

कच्यौ गेह् त्यज कच्यौ वनवास
व्यफोल मन न रटिथ बास ।
द्यन-राथ गंज़रिथ पनुन श्वास
युथय छुख त त्युथुय आस ।।

"The kingdom of heaven is within you". Since Siva is within us as much as He is without us, we can well meet Him at home.

For self-realization, self-discipline is an essential prerequisite. But repression of instinctive tendencies, wants and urges may result in rebounding their effect. Lalla-ded advises proper understanding of the nature of these urges, feeding them with a thoughtful mind, and sublimating them into appropriate wholesome channels. The vakh runs as under :

Lust, Anger and Greed should be done away with,

Otherwise they will aim their darts and kill you,
Nourish them on a thoughtful mind and calm them down with righteous thoughts,

मारुख मारबूथ काम-क्रूद-लूब
नत काण बरिथ मारनय पान
मनय ख्यन दिख स्वव्यचार शम
विषय विषय तिहुंद क्याह् क्युथ दोर जान ॥

Learn thoroughly their nature, functioning and effects. One cannot be too vigilant against the inroads of human passions. Sri Ramakrishna too says: "The curbed senses are like the in-active snake almost beaten to death. The sublimated senses cause harm to none while elevating their own to sublimity." The inner transformation is the key to the spring-board for spiritual attainment. We may not judge individuals by their external superficial behaviour, for we may be mistaken in that. She says :

Some there are who wake even apparently asleep,
And some, apparently awake, lie in slumber deep ;
Some smell foul even after a bath,
And some, ostensibly engaged in household duties, remain actionless.

कैंह् छिय न्यंद्रिहती वदी
कैंच़न वुद्यन न्यसर प्ययी ।
कैंह् छिय स्नान करिथ अपूती
कैंह् गेह् ब'ज़िथ ति अक्रयी ।

Lalla-ded and Sri Ramakrishna gave utterance to their spiritual experiences from their heights of knowledge and understanding. They had gained the pinnacle of Truth where-from the petty discrimination between man and man totally disappears, Lalla-ded's lesson in this regard is very significant. She says :

He who has deemed another and himself as equals,
He who has deemed the day (of joy) and the night (of sorrow) alike,
He whose mind has become free from duality,
He and he alone has seen the Lord of the chiefest of gods.

पर तय पान य'म्य सोम मोन
यम्य ह्यूव मोन द्यन किहो राथ ।
यम्यसुय अद्वय मन सापुन
तमिय डयूंठ्य सुरगुरनाथ ॥

And that has been the lesson of Sri Ramakrishna too. The spiritual monarchs have a fraternity of their own and their rule over human mind will continue forever.

—By Courtesy "The SARADA" Published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Sgr.

Bhagawan Gopinath Ji

BY

DR. TEJ NATH DHAR

These days it is fashionable to write about godmen, saints and various kinds of spiritual pundits. This is especially so in India, because some of them have become our big foreign exchange earners. Newspapers, Magazines Journals, and even radios focus on them for their so-called super-human powers, and also for the suspicions that some of them have aroused in rational and skaptical minds. It is also a a fact that some of these godmen have expressed, in no uncertain terms, that they are the incarnation of God. But, apart from these publicity minded godmen, who look more like seasoned businessmen, there still exists in our country a small number of real—yes, I say real—and authentic godmen, who do not need to come to the limelight. We have only to go near them, we have even to find them, to see the light for ourselves. It is this small group of people who continue to preserve our venerable traditions of god-hood and sainthood. In this highly competitive age of material advancement, such great souls remind us about the true stature and power of a dedicated human being. Perhaps even this description of a Saint does not adequately describe the spiritual attainment of Shri Gopi Nath Ji of Kashmir who, in his own life time, earned the appellation of "BHAGAWAN".

Not many people from outside Kashmir know Bhagawan Gopi Nath Ji. He never visited any place outside Kashmir. He never acted like a spiritual leader, nor did he seem to be keen on propagating his philosophy or outlook on life. He was only a realized soul, happy in the company of a small number of his devoted pupil. It is gratifying to note that many people evince interest in his life and activities.

Bhagawan Ji, one of the numerous children in the family, was born on July 3, 1898, in the home of Pandit Narayan Joo Bhan who, in his own humble way, was a man of God. When he was ten, his father renounced his family, and he along with the other members of the family, had to move from place to place for shellter. Even when he was gainfully employed, he continued with his habit of living in other

people's houses. The last eleven years of his life he spent at Chandapora, Srinagar.

Bhagawan Ji was not a highly educated man ; he studied only upto 8th class, but was well read in many scriptures. Perhaps such people do not need much bookish knowledge to muddle their intellect. After a small job with a printer he set up a bnsiness shop of his own for some years. He also remained in family affairs, although he himself did not marry. But after acquiring the age of 39 years, he finally renounced everyting and became a true sanyasi. Path to godhood is not all that easy : he had to pass through such penance and intense tapa that he virtually became indifferent towards his physical existence. His biographer, S.N. Fotedar, who was intimately connected with him for more than two decades, records his days of intense Sahdana in the following words :

"He would be found lying on a bed, face towards the wall, with a small lamp burning in his room for twenty four hours...the room and Bhagawan Ji's bed were covered with layers of dust which he would not allow to be swept. Cobwebs and spiders were also present in the room. During this period a rat had bored a hole in one of the heels of the foot which had been there for a long time......At times Bhagawan Ji would vomit basinfuls of blood and his body was wholly swoollen and he looked like a ghoul......This tapasya lasted seven years and he came out of this great ordeal, clairvoyant and elairaudient, with full vision of the past, present and future, a Siddha with a body mouled but a radiant soul".

The intense suffering and bodily pain that he underwent reminds us of the sufferings of Buddha. Perhaps it is true that man learns only through suffering. And for acquiring Gyana———the supreme knowledge————one has to suffer greatly.

After he came out victorious from the battles within his soul, Bhagawan Ji looked radiant and blissful. He would puff at his Chellum and be lost in his visions. But he showed visible signs of that power which God alone possesses. I do not want to describe here in detail the miracles that are credited to his name but; I would like to point it out here that whenever he felt like helping somebody of some cause, he did it ungrudgingly. Although he never went to any place outside Kashmir, yet people saw him in Bombay whenever they were in some difficulty. He is supposed to have been seen on battle-fronts by some soldiers during the sino-Indian conflict. Bhagawan Ji could never resist the call of his true Bhaktas. Actually what he did was to transfer the suffering of other people on to his own self. His magic Bhasma is believed to have cured patients who had been given up by their doctors.

Bhagwan Ji spoke very little about his divine experiences. He never founded any school of his own, nor did he strive to win coverts to his creed. But it is true that whenever he found a pure soul who had the potential of going ahead on the divine path, he blessed him. He was his own example—a constant reminder to people that they too had potential to get what he had got. And when Bhagawan Ji is no longer with us in his corporal frame the right way to remember him is to try to model ourselves on him. He always said that as normal human beings, with family and other obligations, we could make a start. But how how many of us are willing and prepared to do that ?

It is gratifying to note that some of the devotees of Bhagawan Ji have realized the

need to follow his path, and perpetuate his ideas for future generations. They have constructed a sizeable Ashrama at Kharyar, Srinagar. Bhagawan Gopi Nath Ji Trust, a big organization, which looks after the Asharama, also undertakes charitable works. But the main purpose behind the organized activity of the Trust and for which the Ashrama is made more and more expansive every year is to spread Bhagwan Ji's message of universal brothernood and God realization. The activities of the Trust have already crossed the borders of Jammu and Kashmir State. Satsang Mandals were recently opend at Allahabad and Varanasi. Foreigners too seem to take to Bhagawan Ji in a big way. Enthusiatic Britishers and Australians have already visited the Ashrama at Srinagar and many of them have already turned into his devotees.

—By Courtesy "The VITASTA" Calcutta

Holy Places in Kashmir

By

PROF. CHAMANLAL SAPRU

The scenic beauty of Kashmir is famous all over the world, and attracts every year thousands of tourists who seek relaxation, enjoyment and the charms of nature. Few people outside the State, however, know that it also abounds in a number of pilgrimage centres. Indeed, a popular Sanskrit verse says, 'All the holy places of the world are found in the region of Kashmir.'[1] Living as they do in geographical isolation from the rest of India, Kashmiris have learnt to keep the roots of their culture alive by identifying their rivers, lakes and places with the holy *tirthas* of the mainland. Thus they see the Ganga in their own Gangabal, and Prayaga in the *sangam* (confluence) of their own rivers the Vitastā (more commonly as the Jhelum) and the Sindhu at Shadipur.

From Vedic times to the twelfth century of the present era, Kashmir was one of the important centres of Hindu culture, religion and philosophy. The vitality of the past still survives in the faith, traditions and ways of life of Kashmiri Hindus. Every Hindu who believes in the Sanātana traditions worships God in the form of *Pancayatan*, the Five Deities (literally, the 'five abodes'), namely, Gaṇesa, Siva, Visṇu, Devī and Sūrya. We have in Kashmir temples and *tirthas* (holy places) dedicated to all these deities and also to Avtārs like Śrī Rāma. Let us first note some of the important places of pilgrimage associated with these deities before taking up a general survey of the holy places in Kashmir.

Ganesa

Gaṇesa is worshipped as the *adi deva* (First Deity) in all Hindu rites. He is the son of Śiva, and is considered to be *siddhidata* (the boon-giver) and *vighnaharta* (destroyer of obstacles). In Srinagar we have a prominent temple of Gaṇesa in the heart of the city. It was formerly under the management of the Dharmarth Trust, but is now managed by a local managing committee. An annual festival on Vaisākha Śuklā Caturdasī is held in the premises of the temple, and a *mahayajna* by the Brahman Mahamandal is performed on the

1. पृथिव्यां यानि तीर्थाणि तानि कश्मीर मण्डले;
Nilamata Purana (An ancient work popular in *Kashmir*)

Brahma Jayanti day. There is a legend that during the period of the Pathan rulers, several hundred years back, the original idol of Lord Gaṇesa had been submerged in the Vitastā by the Pandits to save it from desecration. During the Dogra rule the idol was reclaimed by the devotees and installed on the Vasākha Śukla Caturdasi in the temple. This ancient idol is placed in the outer temple by the side of the Śiva *lingam*, and two bigger and more attractive idols, most probably donated by Dogra rulers, are in the main temple.

There is another important temple of Lord Gaṇesa at the foot of the hillock of Hari Parbat which every Hindu considers it his sacred duty to go round everyday. Lord Gaṇesas's temple is the first amongst the shrines strewn on this hillock.

Even the holy pilgrimage to Sri Amarnathji starts with the worship of Śrī Gaṇesa at Ganeshabal near Pahalgam.

Sankara or Siva

There is hardly any place of worship in Kashmir where you will not find a *Siva lingam*. In the world-famous cave of Amarnath an ice *lingam* formed to full size on the fifteenth of the bright half of every month, (Pūrṇimā), and is an object of reverential attraction to the devotees of all faiths. This holy place is visited on the Śrāvaṇa Pūrṇimā every year by thousands of pilgrims from far-off places. The pilgrimage starts from the Dashnami Akhāḍā of Srinagar in the form of a procession. The Mahant (abbot) of the Akhāḍā carries the holy silver mace of Lord Śiva and is followed by hundreds of Sādhus. They reach the cave on the fullmoon day of Śrāvaṇa, which coincides with the popular Raksā-Bandhan festival of North India. Among the great men who have visited this holy cave, the names of Swami Vivekananda and Swami Ramtirtha are worth mentioning. Swami Ramtirtha composed beautiful verses in praise of the Lord. Swami Vivekananda had a profound mystical experience in the cave. Afterwards he said to his European disciples. The image was the Lord Himself. It was all worship there. I never have been to anything so beautiful, so inspiring.'[2]

Another beautiful stone-temple of Lord Śiva is situated on a hill in the Srinagar city commanding a magnificent view. The temple is managed by the Dharmarth Trust. The hill, known as Gopādrī in ancient Sanskrit texts, had the shrine of Jysṭha Rudra on it. It is believed that the great Ācārya Śrī Śamkara on his visit to Srinagar, meditated on this hill which now bears his name. Swami Vivekananda has given the following description of the temple : 'Look ! what genius the Hindu shows in placing his temples ! He always chooses a grand scenic effect ! See, the hill commands the whole of Kashmir.'[3]

The snow-clad peaks around the valley bear one or the other name of Lord Śiva, like Mahādeva', 'Harmukha', etc. It was under the Mahadeva peak in the picturesque range of Harwan that the famous Śiva-Sūtras (the basis of Śaiva philosophy) were composed. Devotees visit this place particularly on the same day on which the pilgrimage to Amarnathji is undertaken. They also visit the following places of worship connected with Śiva on the same day : Dhyaneshwar in Bandipur. Thajwor in Bijbehara and Harishwar in Khonmoh.

There are numerous temples of Śiva in the whole valley. Among them Sadashiva temple in Purushyar and Someshwar temple in Habbakadal find mention in the famous histories and Purāṇas of Kashmir.

2. His Eastern and Western Disciples, *The Life of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta : Advaita Ashrama, 1974) p. 592.

3. *ibid*, p. 583.

Visnu

The only holy place connected with Lord Vishnu in Kashmir is Vishnu-Pada or Kaunsar Naga. This is a big lake situated at a height of more than 14,000 feet in Anantnag district. The lake is shaped like a foot and it is believed that Lord Visṇu had placed his holy foot in the place where the present big lake is found.

Devī or Divine Mother

We have numerous places of pilgrimage dedicated to the Divine Mother in Kashmir of which Ksheer Bhawani, Sri Sharika Mandir, Mahakali Mandir (in Srinagar and Vadora), Jwala Mukhi (in Khrew), Shailapuri (in Nagabal, Baramulla), Baladevi, Sri Vaishnodevi and Sarthal Devi (in Jammu region) are well known. The most important among them all in the valley is of course Ksheer Bhawani.

The temple of Goddess Mahārajanī, known as Ksheer Bhawani, is situated about 14 miles away from Srinagar at the village Tulamula in the famous Sindh valley. The road leading to Ksheer Bhawani has also a spiritual significance. While going to Ksheer Bhawani first we reach 'Vicharnag' (the lake of discrimination). Then we reach 'Tyangal-bal' (the hill of burning charcoals) and Kavajnyar (the fire of cremation ground) and Amar-her (the immortal staircase). These two names denote renunciation. The third place is Aanchar Lake, which derives its origin from Aanchar (righteousness). After going through these places we reach the cherished destination, the holy place of the Divine Mother, the abode of love, pure and divine, and be with the Divine Mother.

An old Sanskrit text called the *Bhrngesa Samhita*[4] carries a chapter known as 'Rajanī-Prādurbhava' which gives a description of the origin of this temple. Rāvaṇa, demon-king fo Lanka, in order to attain unlimited power worshipped Mother Mahā-rajnī. The Divine Mother after being moved by the immense *tapas*) (penance) performed by Rvaṇa, bestowed upon him many boons. Soon after, Rāvaṇa began to lead a life of luxury, and after forcibly taking away Sītā, prepared himself for a battle with Lord Rāma. After watching the misbehaviour of Rāvaṇa, the Devī asked Hanumān to take Her to Satisar (Kashmir) along with 360 Nagas. Hanumānji installed the Devī at the Tulamula village in Kashmir Valley. Here the Devī is being worshipped as 'Ksheer Bhawani' or Goddess Rajanī. Only flowers, milk and sweets are offered to Her.

The Brahmins of Tulamula have been described in *Rajatarangini* as full with spiritual powers. For quite sometime in the past this important *tirtha* remained under flood waters, and it was only after a pious Brahmin Sri Krishna Pandit had avision of it that the place was rediscovered. He was a great devotee of the Devī and composed the famous hymn the *Rajani Stotra*. Later on a beautiful marble temple was created in the centre of the 'Kunda' (spring) by the Dogra rulers. This spring changes colours and is shaped like 'OM' in the Sharada script. Every year an annual festival is held on Jyesṭha Śukla Astmi at this holy place.

During his stay in Kashmir Swami Vivekananda visited this holy place twice or thrice. Soon after he had had the stupendous vision of Mother Kālī at a solitary place near Srinagar, Swamiji went to Ksheer Bhawani on September 30, 1898. There he lived a life of intense *tapas* and devotion to the Mother for a week. His biography gives the following details of his stay

4. This text, source of many other 'Mahatmyas', is not extant now.

"Before this famous shrine of the Mothor he daily performed Homa, and worshipped Her with offering of Kheer (thickened milk) made from one maund of milk, rice and almonds. He told his beads like any humble pilgrim ; and as a special Sadhana, every morning he worshipped a Brahmin pandit's little daughter as Uma Kumari, the Divine Virgin. He began to practise the sternest austerities....

When he returned to Srinagar, he appeared before his disciples a transfigured presence, writes Nivedita... 'No more "Hari Om !". It is all "Mother" now' he said, sitting down 'All my patirotism is gone. Everything is gone, Now it is only "Moth r ! Mother!"... Mother said to me : "What even if unbelievers should enter my temples, and defile my images ! What is that to you ?" Do you protect Me ? Or do I protect you ?" So there is no more patriotism. I am only a little child'.

One day at Kshir-Bhawani he had been pondering over the ruination and desecration of the temple wrought by the Muslim invaders.... It was then that he had heard the Mother speaking as above.... In his meditation on the terrible, in the dark hours of the nights at Kshir-Bhawani, there were other visions that he confided only to one or two of his brother disciples....

At the same shrine, in the course of worship one day, the Swami was brooding with pain on the dilapidated condition of the temple. He wished in his heart that he were able to build a new one there in its place... He was startled in his ruminations by the voice of the Mother Herself, saying to him, 'My child ! if I so wish I can have innumerable temples and magnificent monastic centres. I can even this moment raise a seven-storeyed golden temple on this very spot.'[5]

5. The Life of Swami Vivekananda, p. 598, 599-600.

Sun temple at Martand

Only five miles away from the town of Anantnag on the way to Amarnath, is a village known as Mattan or Bhawan. In ancient scriptures the name of this place is given as Martand (the sun). Here is a beautiful spring and a small rivulet flowing nearby known as the Chaka. On the banks of the Chaka thousands of devotees from northern India perform *sraddha* to their deceased ancestors in *adhikamasa* months and on Vijaya Saptami. About 2½ km. from the spring are the ruins of a magnificent temple dedicated to the Sun known as Martand. The temple in Indo-Greek architectural style was built by Lalitāditya, a great king of Kashmir. Swami Vivekananda visited this place at least three times.

Other shrines

The two prominent places of pilgrimage of Muslims and Sikhs are Hazartbal and Chhatipadhsahi. The Hazratbal shrine on the Dal lake facing east is known as the Second Mecca. The holy relic of Prophet Muhammad is preserved here. The Chhatipadshahi is a Gurdwara near Hari Parbat which had been visited by the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. Once upon a time the region of Kashmir was an important centre of Buddhism, the influence of which is seen in some temple sculpture. At present Buddhism is the dominant religion of Ladakh which is now a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

It shall be noted that in this article we are dealing with only the holy places in Kashmir proper. Those in Jammu and Ladak have their own distinctive features and have not been included here. Let us now have a bird's-eye view of the innumerable holy places found all over the valley of Kashmir.

SOUTHERN KASMIR

Amarnath

The natural cave with its huge ice Śiva Lingam is the most famous centre of pilgrimage is Kashmir.

Vetha-Vatur

Here is the source of river Vitasta. Annual pilgrimage to this place is performed on the thirteenth day of dark half of the Bhādra month.

Khana Barni

Dedicated to Divine Mother, it is near Qazigund.

Kapal Mochan

Annual festival on Śrāvara Śuklā Dvādasi is held here and devotees perform *Sraddha*. It is situated near Shopian.

Manzgam

A temple in the forest, dedicated to Mother Rajna. Annual festival is held on Jyesṭha Asṭami.

Anantnag

This holy spring after which the town as well as the district is named, is famous for its crystal-clear water. Annual festival of Ananta Devata is held on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Bhādra month.

Thajiwore

It is situated near Bijbihara. An old Śiva temple is found here and the annual festival is held is Śrāvaṇa Pūrṇimā.

Gautama Nag

It is situated at about 4½ km. away from Anantnag. It was founded by Gautam Rishi.

Lokabhawan

Annual festival is held here and a *mahayajna* performed under the patronage of Mahatma Pushkarnathji.

Uma Nagari

A temple and a spring of Goddess Umā is found here. Annual *mahayajna* is performed here under the auspicies of Sri Swayamanadji.

Nagadandi

Sri Ramakrishna Maha Sammelan, managed by the Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee of Kanyakumari, is situated here. An ancient spring and a few idols of some ancient temple are found here. An annual festival is held on the day Chhari (Amarnath pilgrimage) starts. It is 3 km. away from Achhabal.

Gosayeen Gond

An attractive neat and clean Ashrama is found here. During Amarnath Yatra a number of devotees visit this Ashrama and stay and medidate for a few days.

Vishnu Pad

Known also as Kaunsarnaga, it is about 14 miles away Aharbal fall ; the jounery to it is hazardous.

Jwala Mukhi

This *tirtha* dedicated to Goddress Jvālā (Flame) is situated about 20 km. from Srinagar in Anantnag district. A temple of Jvalaji is situated on a hillock there. Annual festival is held on Jvālā-Caturdasi (fourteenth day of the dark second half of Āsāḍ).

Kurukshetra

It is near Pampore (famous for safforn, where the great mystic poetess of Kashmir, Lalleshwari or Lalded, lived). Festivals are held here on the occasions of solar and lunar eclipses.

Baladevi

This famous *tirtha* is dedicated to Bala Bhagavati (Tripurasundari). She is the family deity of the Dogra rules, and the temple is managed by the Dharmarth Trust. The place

of pilgrimage is situated in Balahama near Pampur.

NORTHERN KASHMIR

Koti Tirtha

It is situated on the right bank of the Vitasta (Jhelum) at Baramulla. It is believed that the holy waters of one crore *tirthas* reach here through the Vitasta and is therefore considered very sacred.

Shailputri (*Devibal*)

This *tirtha* is situated on the left bank of the Vitasta at Baramulla. This is a miniature Ksheer-Bhawani.

Nandkeshwar (*Seer-Jagir*)

A famous temple of Śiva known as Nandakesvar Bhairava, situated on the left bank of the Vitasta at Sopore. The annual festival is held on Jyesṭha Amāvasyā here.

Nandkesawar (*Sumbal*)

An ancient place for worship of Nandakesvar Bhairava situated in Sumbal village.

Gophaball

Situated near Langet, Handwara.

Bhadrakali

This Tirtha dedicated to Goddess Kāli is situated in a thick pine forest near Vadipora Handwara).

Takar (*Gushi*)

Situated near Kupvara this *tirtha* is dedicated to the Divine Mother (Mahārajani).

Chandigam

Situated in the picturesque valley of Lolab in Sogam. A monastery of sanyasins belonging to the Niranjani Akhara has been established here.

Gosayeen Teng

Situated on a hillock at Baramulla. Some springs dedicated to Bhagavèn Śri Rèmachandra are found here

Sharadaji

Now in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and situated on the bank of Kishanganga, it was a famous centre of pilgrimage throughout the country before partition. It is considered to be a *Sidha Pitha*, like the Sharika Chakreshwar temple on Hari Parbat. It was once upon a time a great centre of learning, and students and scholars from far off places used to come here. Some mounments still exist there. The place was for centuries associated with the culmination of Hindu religious sholarship and authority which even the great teacher Śri Śamkara had to acknowledge.

DISTRICT SRINAGAR

Shankarachacya Hill

A beautiful Śiva temple exists on the hillock called Shankaracharya Hill. Annual festival on the day of Amarnath Darsan is held here.

Hari Prabat

A hillock of Srinagar city, it has many temples around it. The main temple is of Goddees Sārikā, the presiding Deity of Kashmir. Annual festivals on the first Navarātri and Āsāḍha Navami are held here. This is considered a *Sidha pitha*, a place of awakened Divine Presence.

Ksheer Bhawani

Twenty kilometres away from Srinagar, it is a spring in which a temple has been constructed dedicated to Mother Rajani,Annual festival is held on Jyesṭa Asṭami.

Gangabal

A lake situated near Harmukh peak ; it is the most beautiful lake in Kashmir. Annual festival is held on the Ganga Asṭami in Bhādra mohth. People immerse the ashes of their dead relatives here and also perform Śrāddha.

The journey to this place is most hazardous but is much rewarding.

Guptaganga (Nishat)

Just adjacent to the Nishat garden. On the Vaisākhi festival devotees come from all over Kashmir to have a dip in the spring here. A Śaiva Math is also attached to it where Sunday classes on Śaivism are conducted by the well-known teacher Swami Lakshman Joo.

Jyeshteshwara

A temple of Jyeṣṭha Devi is located in between Shankaracharya Hill and Chasma Shahi. A pilgrimage to this place on Thursdays in the month of Jyeṣṭha is considered auspicious.

Gangajatan

Situated in the tehsil of Badgam. On Ganga Aṣṭami day people come here to have a dip. It is almost a dry spring but on this particular day, at a particular hour, water gushes out and devotees have their holy bath.

Badipur

Situated in the tehsil Chadura near Nagam, it is a miniature Ksheer Bhawani. Annual *mahayajna* on Vaisākha Śuklā Aṣṭami is held here.

Mahakali Asthapan

Situated by the side of the famous Khanaqah of Shah Hamdan ; it is believed that a magnificent temple of Mahā Kālī once existed here. The annual festival is held here on Pausa Kṛṣṇa Paksa Aṣṭami.

Vaskur

Dedicated to the mystic poetees Rūpa Bhavānī, cohsidered to be an incarnation of Goddess Śārikā. Annual festival is held here on Sahib-Satami, the seventh day of the dark fortnight of Māgha.

Vichar Nag

Situated on Srinagar-Leh Highway at a distance of about 10 km. from Srinagar. The annual festival is held on Caitra Amāvasyā the last day of the Kashmir calender.

The famous Kashmiri Pandit, Shirya Bhat, responsible for the change of heart of Sultan Zainulabidin, later known as Budshah (the Great Monarch), lived here.

JAMMU

Vaishno Devi

This is a famous as Amarnathji and Ksheer-Bhawani of Kashmir. Lakhs of pilgrims, mostly from northern India, visit this place. The Divine Mother in her Vaiṣṇavī from is being worshipped here. The main temple is 11 km. above Katra, a town on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. Devotees prefer to visit the shrine on Nava-Rāta days.

Sarthal Devi

It is situated in Doda district of Kishtwar. There is a popular belief that Mother Śārikā (Hari Parbat) shifts during winter to this place.

There are many other places of pilgrimage in Jammu region such as Burha Amarnath, Sudh Mahdev, etc.

—By courtesy "PRABUDDHA-BHARATA" Calcutta.

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Sri Ramakrishna Ashram
SHIVALAYA, KARAN NAGAR
SRINAGAR KASHMIR, 190010

BY

ACHIEVEMENTS & ACTIVITIES
SHRI M.K. DHAR

**Religious work :*— Morning Puja and evening Aarati is a regular part of daily worship Reading from Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and other scriptures a regular feature.

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Pran Nath Kaul
Secretary
Bhagawan Shri Gopinath Ji Trust

Bhagawan Shri Gopinath Ji, the great mystic saint of Kashmir of this century and one of the rarest 'siddhas' of our times, was born on Friday, the 3rd July, 1898, at Bana-mohalla in Srinagar in one of the most highly esteemed Bhan families of Kashmiri Pandits and attained Mahasamadhi on Tuesday, the 28th May, 1968 at chandapora, Srinagar.

For about 21 years Bhagawan Ji did great penance trying to stem the tide of cataclysms that had engulfed Kashmir. Being a saint who had gained mastery over the Tattwas, who could not only see through the past, the future and the present, but, by offering great penance, without regard to the welfare of his physical body, opposed the malgnant forces disrupting the country. His method consisted in emitting vibrations from the various organs of his body—in tune with the Universal Cosmic Vibrations.

His life on this nebulous earth was a saga of mental and spiritual exercise undertaken to proffer 'Bliss' unto the ailing mankind running after shadows. His Cosmic Appearance was imply a medium between the Man and his Spirit. He was, therefore, proficient enough to mark the frontiers between the manifest and the unmanifest, the Self and the Super-self. The man, by Bhagawan Ji's suggestive intuitions, could rise above the obduration engulfing him at every step.

His orbit of ever-continuous and rewarding penance was obviously Kashmir, out of which he never moved throughout his life, physically. God only knows what distant mental journeys he must have undertaken to educate man on the globe, to abjure the mandane and aasimilate the sublime.

Bhagawan Ji ushered in a healthy revolution in the thinking of man when, instead of preaching to abjure, beckoned us to assimilate.

It is gratifying to note that with the blessings of Bhagawan Ji, a devoted band of his votaries are doing their best to disseminate his message throughout the four corners of the world. Our friends in the country, Australia, U.S.A. and other continents are a living proof of the astral brotherhood nursed and caressed by Bhagawan Ji.

Soon after Bhagawan Shri Gopinath Ji gave up his mortal coil, in May, 1968; an Ashram was built in his sacred memory to give partical shape to his teachings and to check, as far as possible, the modern wave of athesim and materialism that has affected the people's ways of thought and behaviour. The Ashram has been constructed at Durga Mandir, Kharyar, Srinagar, where his relics and a large statue dave been enshrined.

Prime concern of the Ashram has been to involve younger generation in its piligrimage to 'Divine'. It is alleged, more in ignorance than in reality, that our young man is 'hungry' and so angry, beyond any seeming hope of return. But we feel flattered to obse rve that the youth, rubbing shoulders with us here, have earned the credentials to banish both hunger and anger altogether from their minds and it is their devotion and immaculate sense of duty which prompts us to feel assured that our future is safe in their hands. They are gradually identifying the much covetted tools and well deserved direction which will most securely channelise their bubbling fervour into self upliftment and not in any case into self-denigration.

A Trust, comprising of both young and older devotees in the Ashram, has been formed some years back.

The activities of the Trust are :

1. Celebration of the two main annual festivals of the shrine ;—
   (a) MAHAYAGYA corresponding to the Maha-Nirvana-Divas of Bhagawan Ji on Jeshtha Shukla Dwitiya ;
   (b) MAHAJAYANTI on Ashaad Shukla Dwadashi.
2. Celebrations of birthdays of Holy Souls and other religious festivals.
3. Arrangeing 'darshana' of the holy relics of Bhagawan Ji and distribution of 'Maha-Vibhuti'.
4. Providing financial aid to orphans, destitutes, sick and other needy persons.
5. Publication of literature on Bhagwan Ji, emphasizing religious and cultural importance.
6. (a) The Trust participated in the delegate session of the first All India Kashmiri Pandit Confrence at Allahabad on the 8th and 9th March, 1980. A working paper was presented there by the President of the Trust.
   (b) Camps were held at Allahabad during the 'KUMBH' (1977) and at the World Hindu Conference (1979).
   (c) Bhagwan Gopinath Ji Satsang Mandal at Kreem Kund, Varanasi, has been inaugurated by 'Bhagawan Ram' of Servesheri Samooh, Varanasi, on 24-4-1978 to spread Bhgwan Ji's message of universal love.

The Trust has had the privilege of the services of various dedicated and distinguished personalities of the community from time to time in different capacities. Some of them are :

Justice Shiv Nath Katju	: Chief Patron
Shri Shankar Nath Fotedar	: Founder Patron
Shri Shridhar Joo Dhar	: 1st President
Prof. Kashi Nath Dhar	: 2nd President
Prof. Janki Nath Sharma	: 3rd President
Hakim Shri Sham Lal Bhat	: 1st Vice-President

The Trust fervently appeals to one and all to contribute liberally towards the expansion of the Ashrama premisesso that it continues to flourish as a centre of spiritual teachings and Bhagwan Ji's grace and a source of inspiration to spiritual aspirants. Donations in cash and/or kind are always gratefully acknowledged.

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"My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will come my workers. They will work out the whole problem, like lions. I have formulated the idea and have given my life to it...They will spread from centre to centre, until we have covered the whole of India.

—Swami Vivekananda

We are little men Serving a great cause, but because the cause is great something of that great nessfalls upon us also.

—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

Shall India die ? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all moral perfection will be extinct··· Such a thiag can never be.

—Swami Vivekananda



"Give me a few man and women who are pure and selfless, and I shall shake the world."

—Swami Vivekananda

—o—

"Faith sympathy, fiery faith and fiery sympathy ! Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith in God this is the secret of greatness."

—Vivekananda



We are responsible for what we are, and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are how has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions, so we have to know how to act.

—Swami Vivekananda

Achievement requirs charachter...discipline...united action and the readiness to saacrifice the individual self for the Larger cause.

—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

"There is a popular saying that Hanuman jumped over the sea through his faith in Rama's name, but Rama Himself had to build a bridge."

—Sri Ramakrishna

"This life is short, the vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than aiive."

—Swami Vivekananda

"Be not afraid of anything. You will do marvellous work. The moment you fear, you are nobody. It is fear that is the great cause of misery in the world.

—Swami Vivekananda

If you want peace of mind then give up fault-finding. If you would search for fault at all, find out your own faults and shortages.

—Sri Sarada Devi



Men, men, these are wanted : everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone, are wanted. A hundred such and the world becomes revolutionized.

—Swami Vivekananda

"Thinking all the time that we are diseased will not cure us; medicine is necessary Being reminded of weakness does not help much. The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness, but thinking of strength."

—Swami Vivekananda

Those who are prepared to die for any cause are seldom defeated.

—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

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It is faith in the 'name' of the Lord that Works wonders ; for faith is life and want of faith is death.

—Sri Ramakrishna





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"Follow the path of duty; show kindness to the brothers and free them from suffering"
—The Buddha

The only word that Teacher said "Withdraw And See Withen Thyself"
This Set The Track That Gopi Treads And Om And Om And Om HE CHANTS.
—Bhagawan Gopinath Ji

"Make your nerves strong. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. We have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men."

—Swami Vivekananda

क्याह् कर' पांचन दह्न त' काह्न,
वोक्षुन यथ ल्यजि यिम क'रिथ गय।
साँरिय समह्न यथ रजि लमह्न,
अद' क्याजि राविहे काह्न गाव॥
-- लल्लेश्वरी

HOW SHALL I DEAL WITH THESE FIVES (ELEMENTS), TENS (SENSORY ORGANS) AND ELEVENS (SENSORY ORGANS TOGETHER WITH MIND) ? THESE HAVE EMPTIED OUT MY CAULDRON (SCATTERED MY WITS AND TAKEN AWAY MY COMPOSURE AND CONCENTRATION) IF ALL OF THEM COULD COME TOGETHER AND PULL IN THE SAME DIRECTION, THE BOAT WOULD THEN BE FERRIED OVER. SO LONG AS THERE IS DISCORD, ALL THE ELEVEN SO-CALLED MASTERS CLAIM THE COW (OBJECT) INDIVIDUALLY AND THE OBJECT IS LOST.

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